

NEWS

and Information

A Quarterly Newsletter from the Premier Trainer of Federal, State and Local Government Professionals

July-September 2003

SAVE THE DATE

for the
Blacks in Government
Annual Training
Conference

August 25-29, 2003

in Denver, Colorado

programs

The Graduate School, USDA will exhibit at the following upcoming conferences:

Department of Energy Training Conference
New Orleans, La.
August 18-22, 2003

IPMA-HR 2003 International Training Conference
Chicago, Ill.
September 10-13, 2003



Federal Supply Schedule 69 for the Graduate School

The General Services Administration has approved the Graduate School, USDA under Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) 69 for our courses. Government pre-approval applies to all instructor-led training and is a convenient means for customers and clients to contract for our products and services. According to David Hitt, director of client relations, "The Graduate School's recent approval to be listed on the FSS is a significant addition to the manner in which federal agencies can conduct business with the School and, in many cases, will serve to make the process simpler and more direct, thus saving time and effort. Added to the previous ways of doing business with the School, our listing on the FSS will give agencies alternatives in keeping with their preferred method(s) of contracting."

To qualify for FSS 69 required a rigorous application process, which began in October 2002 and was led by Administrative Director Bob Kies and Jane Burke, Debora Bush and Rick Parker of our Proposal Office. Burke and Bush wrote the proposal and provided extensive research. During the review GSA requested changes, necessitating more submissions, telephone calls and explanatory letters. After this herculean effort, the Graduate School received the Schedule 69 authorization in May.

For more information, contact the Graduate School's client relations staff at (202) 314-3524.

STATS

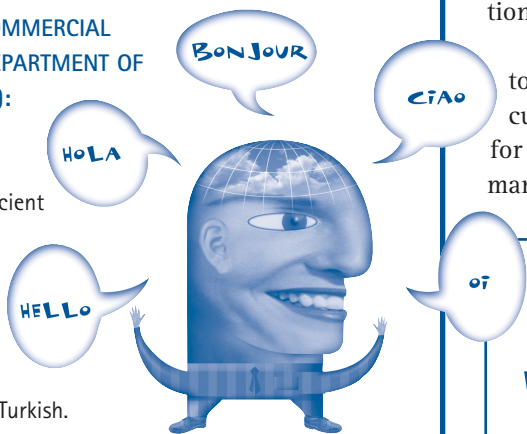
Language Skills Shortage

Commercial interests, military deployments, intelligence operations and counter-terrorism efforts require more employees with a high level of foreign language training. Yet many agencies experience shortages in personnel with first-degree language skills.

U.S. ARMY: 15,000 positions require proficiency in 62 languages. A 44 percent shortfall of translators and interpreters in Arabic, Korean, Mandarin-Chinese, Persian-Farsi and Russian.

FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SERVICE (DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE):

A 55 percent shortfall of staff proficient in Korean, Mandarin-Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Russian and Turkish.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE: 2,581 positions require training spanning 64 languages. Significant shortages.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION: 1,792 special agents with skills in 40 languages. Significant shortages.

To meet the critical need, the **DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE** in Monterey, California has recently added courses in Pashto, Dari and Uzbek (all spoken in Afghanistan) and plans training in Basha, Indonesian and Urdu (the language of Pakistan).

Source: Government Executive Magazine, May 1, 2002.



tions—open enrollment, led the in-house team that worked on the redesign. Beta testing is scheduled for early July. The site is curriculum-focused and reflects the School's new organizational structure. Employing assorted search tools, the site showcases the diversity of our courses and services. Of great significance, the site enhances the customer's ability to register online. It focuses on curriculum areas and quickly provides the details customers need for decision making. Its simple navigation tools target "hubs" of easily accessible information for students, training managers and faculty.

New Web Site Design

The Graduate School, USDA will launch in late summer a redesigned Web site. We have taken the best features of our current site, enhanced them, added to them and, using customer feedback, made a full-service site that is both streamlined and customer-focused. We have partnered with C.E. Technologies, a leading developer of career and education technology, to use their powerful Web-enabled search engine to provide and deliver the best educational choices to customers. Maureen Hetzel, director of client rela-

Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman Welcomes New Board Members

Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman welcomed her six new appointees to the General Administration Board of the Graduate School, USDA when she visited the School on June 11, 2003. The new appointees are Marjorie L. Budd, Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection; Ruth A. Davis, Department of State; Wayne H. Harmon, Social Security Administration; Warren Master, *The Public Manager*; Patrick Mendis, World Wildlife Fund; and Linda J. Washington, Department of Transportation. Addressing all the board members, Veneman credited the Graduate School for meeting the education and training demands and challenges of the changing global economy, the aging federal workforce and technology.



Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman (second from left) greets board members during her Graduate School visit. From left; Marjorie Budd, Susan Porter Robinson and Linda Washington.



Dr. Giampaolo Cantini, first counselor at the Italian Embassy, presents the Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity to Maria Wilmeth.

Italians Honor Wilmeth

The government of Italy honored Dr. Maria Guarrera Wilmeth, Graduate School foreign language consultant, with the “Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity” and the title of “Commendatore II” at its Washington embassy on March 20. Created to acknowledge the achievements of Italians and others who promote the study of Italian language and culture abroad, the decoration recognizes Wilmeth for her support of Italian language and culture in the metropolitan area. Presenting the award, First Counselor Dr. Giampaolo Cantini stated, “The Italian government is very grateful to you for your tireless dedication ... and for the remarkable contribution you have made to the growth of the Washington Italiana.”

Wilmeth worked to found the language program of the Italian Cultural Society of Washington and served as coordinator of foreign languages for the Fairfax County school district for 20 years. At the Graduate School she served as program manager for foreign languages and English as a Second Language for 11 years.

Pueblo Zuni Graduate in CPM Program

On July 18, 2003, twenty members of the Pueblo Zuni will graduate from our Certified Public Manager (CPM) Program. Graduate School, USDA Director Jerry Ice and General Administration Board member Lou Gallegos will speak at the ceremony on the tribe’s New Mexico reservation. Norma Ford is the Graduate School’s administrator for the CPM Program.

At graduation, teams will present results of projects, suggested by their tribal governments and approved by their Graduate School coaches. One team has assessed the impact on the Pueblo Zuni of programs—such as welfare-to-work—spawned by Public Law 102-477, the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992. Another team studied foster children, who, due to a lack of facilities, have been placed with families off-reservation. That team determined that these children need more cultural nourishing, and therefore a facility must be established on-site. A third team focused on how to create small business opportunities.

In the March 2003 edition of the “PA TIMES,” Mary Hamilton, executive director of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), recounts her experience as a teacher in the CPM Program on the Pueblo Zuni reservation. She finds the participants “quick studies,” adeptly applying new terms and concepts, and looks forward to teaching another course.

The Graduate School at ASTD



Graduate School Client Relations Manager Al Tyree discusses our training programs with prospective customers at the ASTD conference in San Diego, May 19-22, 2003.

Faculty Profiles



William Jensen

With years of experience in administrative law, William Jenson imparts to his students a rich background of information. In fact, the American Council on Education’s College Credit Recommendation Service recently increased the ratings for three of his courses—Business Law I, Business Law II and Administrative Law and Procedures—from two credits to three. Since 1980

Bill has been a member of the Graduate School’s law and paralegal studies faculty. Presently, he is teaching the certificate seminar in paralegal studies. In the past he has taught legal research. Bill enjoys the Graduate School classroom, for he feels that the two-way interaction with students keeps him current.

After receiving a law degree from Suffolk University in Boston in 1975, he served on the staff in the general counsel’s office at the Department of Agriculture for twenty years. In 1996 he was appointed judicial officer at the Department of Agriculture. In that post, he renders final decisions on appeals regarding the decisions of administrative law judges. He thrives in this job because it deals with administrative law and what he enjoys most—research, reading and writing. Bill lives in Arlington and exercises and reads in his free time.



Pan Lemos

For Graduate School mathematics teacher, Pan Lemos, teaching is about communication, understanding and feedback. He maintains that teaching mathematics calls for a unique combination of precision and interpersonal communications; without both mathematics cannot be taught. With mathematics instruction, however, there are problems and opportunities, and

new perspectives are acceptable. Pan enjoys teaching. At the Graduate School, he teaches three or four courses a term and oversees the mathematics center, which provides students with tutoring and is particularly popular around exam time. Pan tutors students individually or combines small groups who are interested in similar problems.

A native of Greece, Pan immigrated to the United States in 1968 to study business at Boston University. A year later he transferred to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where his focus changed to mathematics and physics. He has a bachelor of science degree in mathematics. After some graduate work in physics at the University of Texas and the University of North Texas, Pan worked for several defense contractors in research and development on Star Wars and for the Patriot and MX missile systems and the Star Wars system. This work ended when the “evil empire” evaporated.

Besides consulting and teaching at the Graduate School, Pan will soon embark part-time on a doctoral program in statistics at the University of Maryland. He is also a volunteer teacher for community outreach schools. Pan enjoys pure math research, recreational mathematics, politics and writing poetry. A novel is also near completion. In his early years here, he regularly vacationed in Greece. Now he travels mostly in the United States.



Susanne Hoepfl-Wellenhofer

Meeting and falling in love with an American economist in Serbia in 1984 changed life’s direction for Austrian native Susanne Hoepfl-Wellenhofer. At the time she was completing law school and working for the Austrian government in Serbia. Two offspring later, she enjoyed the convenience of teaching German in Evening Programs at the Graduate School; this position allowed her daytime hours for her young children.

Susanne has been a valued faculty member in our foreign language program for ten years. She developed the material for the German language course Immersion I. She also designed and has taught the advanced conversation course Aktuelle Themen, which combines a variety of instructional styles. For students with a very advanced vocabulary, the course deals with today’s events, and special sessions are devoted to politics, economics, literature, the arts and post-war history. There is even a music evening. At the present time, Susanne is teaching one course at the Graduate School and first- and second-year German at George Washington University.

Besides her family, Susanne’s major outside interest is martial arts. She holds a second-degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do. This is a family activity, also involving her husband and sons.

Congressional Fellows Graduate



At the graduation for Congressional Fellows were Lynn Edwards, Graduate School deputy executive director; Senator Conrad Burns (R. Mt.); Graduate School Executive Director Jerry Ice; Keith J. Collins, General Administration Board member, and Mary K. Waters, of the Department of Agriculture.

The Graduate School's Congressional Fellows Program graduated a class of twenty-two on January 30, 2003 in the Mansfield Room of the U.S. Capitol. Senator Conrad Burns spoke at the ceremony, which was attended by two Department of Agriculture officials: Mary K. Waters, assistant secretary for congressional relations, and Keith J. Collins, chief economist. Graduate School Executive Director Jerry Ice introduced the Montana senator and former Marine, who had hosted a Fellow—a NASA flight surgeon. This year's class also contained five Marine Corps officers.

Begun in 1997, the Congressional Fellows Program offers senior-level federal personnel and uniform service equivalents the opportunity to serve on a staff of a member of Congress or of a congressional committee for either six months or one year.

Fellows experience the legislative process and the culture of the Hill. Three past graduates now work for senators. Ed Willett is the director of congressional programs at the Graduate School.

The Graduate School has added a seven-part series to its congressional programs. The series includes The New Congress, a course offered biennially that will review election results and leadership changes; Working with Congressional Staff and Office Operations; Preparing and Delivering Congressional Testimony; Tracking and Monitoring Legislation; The President's Budget; Congressional Budget and Appropriations Process; and Congressional Operations Workshop.

In Memory

Doris Hourihan

Doris Hourihan, a valued award-winning faculty member, died on January 19, 2003 in Brooklyn, New York. Doris was an outstanding writing instructor for our Northeast office and contributed to the redesign of our Clear Writing through Critical Thinking course. At the Graduate School she was known for her elegance and teaching excellence. During her professional life she had taught in the classroom at every level—from elementary to graduate school.

NEWSbriefs

WILLETT ON ACCREDITING TEAM

Ed Willett, director of congressional programs at the Graduate School, recently served as a "practitioner" on an accrediting team for the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NAS-PAA). The three-member team reviewed the Master of Public Administration program for Virginia Commonwealth University.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR CMS

To assist in providing customer service and education, the Graduate School has developed a learning management system for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS). This system allows CMS to register individuals for training (Web-based, classroom and satellite broadcast), deliver Web-based training, fulfill product requests and maintain a database for broadcast constituent mailings.

PROGRAMS FOR THE FOREST SERVICE

The Graduate School recently delivered nine educational programs to 1,000 Forest Service employees at their Forest Service University in Cincinnati. This is their annual two-week training event, which is sponsored by the eastern and southern regions of the Forest Service.

DCAA PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Agreeing to expand its partnership with the Graduate School, the Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) Training Institute in Memphis will add seven of our audit courses to the *Common Non-DCAA* course list in their training software. Thus auditors can consider Graduate School courses when they make their annual training plans.

ICGFM CITES ICE AND ALIFERIS

At the annual conference in April of the International Consortium of Government Financial Managers (ICGFM), the Graduate School provided, in three languages, a two-day training program: Building a Strong Financial Management Framework. More than 100 senior financial managers from 23 countries participated, and ICGFM cited Executive Director Jerry Ice and Director Peter Aliferis as major players in the conference.

AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK FORUM

The Graduate School managed the Agricultural Outlook Forum on February 20-21. Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman keynoted the opening session. Twelve hundred people attended the conference, which was sponsored by the USDA World Agricultural Outlook Board.

PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS PARTNERSHIP

In its first training partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Graduate School delivered Conducting IT Security and Controls Reviews in a Government Environment as an open-enrollment course, March 26-28.

ACTIVE DUTY FOR HARRIS

To support the current war effort, the Air Force Reserves ordered Mary (MJ) Harris to report for active duty April 10. The Graduate School's human resources manager is serving at Andrews Air Force Base for up to one year.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Renowned for its foreign language instruction, the Graduate School, USDA teaches languages at many levels, from introductory to advanced and conversational courses. Many agencies and organizations contract with the Graduate School for language instruction. Under such contracts we presently teach Russian at the Patuxent Naval Air Station and English for Professionals at the Defense Intelligence Service Agency, and, in the past, we have instructed World Bank employees in Arabic and Chinese.

Individuals subscribe to language training for a variety of reasons: to converse with an extended family; to maneuver more easily when traveling; or to pursue a fascination with foreign languages and cultures. More and more there is a necessity for fluency in a foreign language on the job. Post- 9/11, critical agencies still lack personnel conversant in the languages—and nuances—of Afghanistan, central Asia and the Middle East. For that reason our armed forces have contracted for intensive training in Arabic and Farsi.

In our regular enrollment program the Graduate School offers Arabic, Chinese-Mandarin, Czech, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese-Brazilian, Russian, Spanish and Turkish. Thirty-eight percent of the language students enroll in our Spanish courses, and there is increasing interest in Arabic instruction, even beyond the introductory level. On-site training can be scheduled in other languages as well: Albanian, English as a Second Language, Farsi, Indonesian, Lithuanian, Polish, Swahili, Swedish, Thai, Urdu and Vietnamese. More importantly, we have a staff and faculty roster with the ability and experience to conduct courses in even more languages.

Our contract training is flexible. On Capitol Hill we teach conversational Spanish to representatives and senators who wish to communicate better with their Hispanic constituents. For these "Spanish on the Hill" classes, we schedule sessions to accommodate the demands of congressional life. Four senators and twenty representatives have completed the course.

For more information on the language program at the Graduate School, visit our Web site at <http://www.grad.usda.gov/languages>.

Dr. Jerry Ice

Spanish on the Hill



Graduate School Executive Director Jerry Ice attended the opening class of the latest session of Spanish on the Hill. Rep. Gerald C. Weller (R. Ill.) organized this class; Rep. Nathan Deal (R. Ga.) is also a student (seated at right).